

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) An apparatus for coupling comprising:

a ~~first~~ generally planar member having a pair of generally opposed surfaces and an aperture therebetween disposed at an engaging region;

a coupling member having an external thread set and having a complementary portion for engaging the aperture of the planar member; and

a ~~second~~ non-planar member having an internal thread set adapted to engage the external thread set of the coupling member thereby connecting the ~~second~~ non-planar member to the ~~first~~ planar member, wherein portions of the pair of generally opposed surfaces of the planar member extend into the thread set of the non-planar member.

2. (canceled).

3. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the aperture is formed in a region adjacent an edge portion of the ~~first~~ planar member.

4. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the ~~first~~ planar member has more than one aperture.

5. (previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the aperture is a slot.

6. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the coupling member has a larger diameter dimension than a thickness dimension of the ~~first~~ planar member.

7 - 9 (canceled)

10. (currently amended) An apparatus for connecting two members together comprising:

a first member having a pair of generally opposed major surfaces and defining an engaging region, and a slot disposed at said engaging region;

an elongate threaded coupling member having an external thread set and an engaging portion for engaging the slot of the first member, said threaded coupling member removably engaging the slot; and

a second member having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, wherein ~~when~~ said external thread set of the threaded coupling member is threadedly received within the internal thread set, ~~said threaded coupling member securely binds the first member to the second member~~ and wherein portions of the first member extend into the internal thread set of the second member.

11. (currently amended) An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the elongate threaded coupling member is two longitudinal portions of a threaded shank each having an threaded exterior surface and a substantially flat interior surface.

12. (canceled)

13. (previously presented) An apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the thickness of the first member is less than a diameter of the internal thread set.

14. (currently amended) An apparatus for joining two members via a threaded coupling member, said apparatus comprising:

a first member having an aperture disposed proximate an edge;

an elongate threaded coupling member having an external thread set and an engaging portion corresponding to the aperture of the first member, said threaded coupling member removably engaging the aperture and extending away from the edge of the first member; and

a second member having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, said internal thread set operatively receiving a portion of both the external thread set of the threaded coupling member and a portion of the first member to securely bind the first member to the second member.

15 - 19 (canceled)

20. (withdrawn)

21. (new) An apparatus for joining two members via a threaded coupling member, said apparatus comprising:

a generally planar member having an elongated L-shaped structure defined at an edge thereof;

an elongated threaded coupling member having an external thread set, said coupling member being sized to be received within the L-shaped structure of the generally planar member, said threaded coupling member extending away from the edge of the first member; and

a knob member having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, said internal thread set operatively receiving a portion of both the external thread set of the threaded coupling member and a portion of the generally planar member.

22. (new) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the elongated threaded coupling member defines an elongated rectangular channel sized to receive a portion of the L-shaped structure.

23. (new) An apparatus for joining two members via a threaded coupling member, said apparatus comprising:

a generally planar member defining an elongated slot;

an elongated threaded coupling member having an external thread set, at least a portion of said coupling member being configured to pass through the elongate slot of the generally planar member so that portions of the external thread set are disposed at opposite sides of the planar member; and

a knob member having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, said internal thread set operatively receiving a portion of both the external thread set of the threaded coupling member and a portion of the generally planar member.

24. (new) An apparatus for joining two members via a threaded coupling member, said apparatus comprising:

a first member defining a slot which passes between opposed sides of the first member;

a threaded coupling member having an external thread set, at least a portion of said coupling member being configured to pass through the slot of the first member so that portions of the external thread set are disposed at the opposed sides of the first member; and

a knob member having an internal thread set sized to cooperate with the external thread set of the threaded coupling member, said internal thread set operatively receiving a portion of both the external thread set of the threaded coupling member and a portion of the first member.